United Nations A/68/PV.39

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

39th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 29 October 2013, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 40 (*continued*)

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/116)

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote or position, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): Solomon Islands voted today in favour of resolution 68/8, "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

Solomon Islands commends Cuba for taking the most peaceful path in seeking the unconditional lifting of the blockade through the United Nations. This is the only place where we the international community, countries big and small, gather to ensure that what is moral is upheld, what is right is respected, and what must be undone is lifted.

We continue to believe that each and every country has inalienable rights to define and determine its own political system and to participate in international trade. These are the fundamental principles of international law. The 53-year-old coercive economic, financial and commercial blockade on Cuba has an adverse impact on the people of Cuba and hampers their development and progress, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/68/116. This morning Solomon Islands was one of the 188 countries that voted in favour of the resolution.

For the past 22 years, since 1991, the world has annually called on our partner and friend, the United States of America, to end the economic, financial and commercial blockade against the peaceful people of Cuba. The resolution reaffirms a commitment of Solomon Islands and the General Assembly to the principles, letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations — respect for the principles of sovereign equality among member States, and non-interference and non-intervention in the domestic and internal affairs of another State.

The world is changing, and changing fast. We speak of rights. Let us uphold those rights. We speak of freedom. Let us respect each State's freedom to adopt its own political system. We speak of the rule of law. Let us conduct ourselves in conformity with international law. We speak of multilateralism. Let us do away with unilateralism.

Solomon Islands has continued to develop and bolster its relations with both the United States and Cuba. We have more than 100 medical students studying in Cuba. As part of growing relations, we have established an embassy in Havana this year. The

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

13-53630 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

Pacific Islands Forum admitted Cuba as a Post Forum Dialogue Partner. Cuba joins the United States as a Dialogue Partner in my region.

In closing, Solomon Islands calls for the full implementation of the resolution and hopes to see the lifting of the embargo give way to a peaceful coexistence between two great States, the United States and Cuba, as a spirit and constructive engagement unites two very close neighbours.

Mr. Pisarevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Today, just as has been the case for more than two decades, the majority of the Member States of the United Nations, including the Republic of Belarus, advocated in the General Assembly a clear and valid demand to put an end to the economic, commercial and financil embargo of Cuba.

We are convinced that it is an uncivilized and unconstructive way of dealing with disputes in contemporary international relations. The Republic of Belarus continues to deem any unilateral economic measures to be a means of exerting political and economic pressure against developing countries. We believe they are contrary to the basic principles of international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal documents.

We advocate the inalienable right of every State to determine its own development model. Any unilateral attempts by any States to involve themselves in the internal political affairs of other States by using military, political, economic or other forms of pressure are not acceptable.

Belarus calls upon the United States to undertake policies based on unconditional respect for the commonly recognized principles of international law in its relations with Cuba and any other countries in regard to which it is taking coercive measures. Those principles include the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in internal affairs, and respect for the freedom of international trade and internatonal merchant shipping.

At the same time, we believe we must ensure that the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other representatives of the United Nations having responsibilities in international affairs in the areas of peace, security, human rights and sustainable development are more involved in the problem of coercive measures and economic pressure being used by the United States and the European Union.

Based on that, Belarus calls for the creation of special procedures by the United Nations Human Rights Council on the question of human rights and other coercive measures, to call the internatonal community's attention to the unilateral coercive measures applied against Cuba and other countries, which violate human rights. Belarus does not cease to admire the courage of the Cuban people, who continue to fight to defend their State, national digity and sovereignty.

Belarus is proud to support the Cuban sisters and brothers and calls for for an end to the blockade against the Cuban people. We voted in favour of resolution 68/8, with more than 180 other Members of the United Nations.

Mr. Chipaziwa (Zimbabwe): We associate ourselves with the statements made by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and by the representative of Ethiopia on behalf of the African States (see A/68/PV.38).

We voted for resolution 68/8. Zimbabwe once again expresses its deep concern over the continuation of the comprehensive unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against the Republic of Cuba. Those vicious sanctions, which have spanned more than half a century, continue to inflict severe economic hardships on the people of Cuba. Similarly the economic sanctions prohibit Cuba from reaching its maximum potential for trade, economic development and prosperity. The economic blockade also undermines Cuba's right to development.

For twenty-one consecutive years the overwhelming majority of the international community represented in this Hall have consistently demanded the lifting of the trade embargo against Cuba. However, the Assembly's call to lift it have been met with complete defiance. Zimbabwe is of the view that any reasons for the continuation of the economic blockade of Cuba are indefensible, hypocritical and counterproductive. The majority of the Member States of the United Nations have consistently rejected the passing of national laws with extraterritorial impact, and all other coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions which are targeted mainly at developing countries that seek to reassert their sovereignty. As a victim of those

very same ill-conceived illegal, immoral sanctions, Zimbabwe fully understands their impact.

Zimbabwe shares the view that the trade embargo against Cuba contravenes the Charter of the United Nations in regard to all the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. The sanctions constitute an egregious violation of fundamental norms of international law, as they infringe on the sovereignty of Cuba. Furthermore, the embargo is a violation of the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in one another's domestic affairs.

Lastly, the embargo against Cuba is contrary to accepted international trade regulations. Zimbabwe therefore joins other countries in condemning the pernicious trade embargo against Cuba and calls for its immediate and unconditional lifting in order to enable the people of Cuba to pursue their economic and social destiny. That, by any definition, cannot constitute a threat to any other State.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, let me welcome the presence of His Excellency Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, and renew our total support to the Government and people of Cuba in the face of the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the statement delivered by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/68/PV.38).

The embargo imposed on Cuba for several decades has created an unacceptable precedent in dealings between Member States in a manner that is contrary to international law. It has unnecessarily subjected the people of Cuba to several economic, social and political hardship. It has deepened the suffering of the Cuban people and placed the United States in direct confrontation with the universal consensus rejects the embargo, an embargo that has so far caused losses of more than a trillion dollars for Cuba.

For the twenty-second year, the General Assembly is meeting to reaffirm, by an overwhelming majority, the illegitimacy and inhumanity of the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba and its people. The embargo is contrary to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, notably the principle of equal sovereignty among States and non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States, and to the international instruments pertaining to human rights, international humanitarian law and the principles of international trade.

Regrettably, and despite several resolutions passed by the General Assembly by an overwhelming majority and several resolutions adopted by other regional, specialized and political organizations, the economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba since 1959 is still in force today, as if nothing had happened. The support by 188 Member States for resolution 68/8 during this session once more reaffirms that the Member States do not see any legal basis for the embargo imposed on Cuba, and that it must be lifted.

The fact that, in this very Hall, Israel voted against the resolution only confirms that it does not respect international law and that it violates international law, clearly supporting illegitimate practices against the rights of Member States of the United Nations.

The Syrian Arab Republic confirms that the unilateral coercive economic measures imposed by the United States and the European Union against Syria are a flagrant violation of the principles of international law. They represent a hegemonic tool of the West and serve only the purposes of oppression and economic and political coercion. Such measures seek to undermine the independence of national political decisions and to interfere in the internal affairs of Member States in a way that runs counter to the provisions of the Charter. They are also a manifestation of a policy of collective punishment that those States pursue.

Such illegitimate and unjust measures can only foment negative feelings towards the West, as the majority of such measures have been imposed by Western States, particularly the United States of America and the States of the European Union. Such measures seek to weaken the Governments of other Member States or to bring pressure to bear on those Governments in order to force them to change their national policies.

My country reiterates its condemnation of the sanctions imposed by the United States of America and the European Union on the Syrian people. We stress the toll of and adverse effects that such illegitimate unilateral measures have had on the life and prosperity of our people. Such unilateral illegitimate measures prevent Syrians from meeting their basic needs,

in terms of access to medications, food, medical equipment, fuel for heating, agricultural needs, civil aviation transportation services and communications equipment. Besides harming the country's economy, such measures also constitute a violation of the collective human rights of the Syrian people.

In that context, we recall that the imposition of coercive unilateral measures is a violation of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 66/186, entitled "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries" and resolution 66/156, entitled "Human rights and unilateral coercive measures", in which the General Assembly stressed its condemnation and rejection of unilateral economic measures, as it considered such measures to be an impediment to healthy trade relations among States and an obstruction to the full realization of the rights provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. In that context, I would mention the right of individuals and peoples to development. Such measures prevent the enjoyment by each and every individual of a standard of living that ensures enjoyment of the rights to health, prosperity and access to food, medical treatment, education and the necessary social services.

In accordance with its mandate, the General Assembly is called upon to take the necessary measures to put an end to the unilateral, unjust and hostile embargoes and economic sanctions policies that are being pursued by some States of the Organization in violation of international law.

In that regard, my delegation would hope that all forms of embargo and unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States on Cuba and many other States, including my country, Syria, will be brought to an end. My country also hopes that the illegitimate, immoral and inhumane embargo imposed by Israel on the occupied Palestinian territories, including the occupied Golan, will be lifted as well. We hope that the voice of the international community, as expressed by the General Assembly and other international institutions and organizations, will be respected by the United States of America and fully taken into account by its legislative institutions. Accordingly, Syria has voted in favour of resolution 68/8.

Ms. Rivera Sánchez (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to make the following general statement after the voting. El Slavador voted in favour of resolution 68/8, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

First, we would like to highlight the fact that this is the first time that El Salvador is making a statement on the embargo before the General Assembly. In a statement he made in the general debate last September, President Mauricio Funes Cartagena said:

> "[We] advocate once again for the lifting of the blockade against Cuba... as I believe that Cuba is part of the American soul and that the blockade is a relic of the past. The brotherly people of Cuba, like all peoples of the world, have the right to seek development and well-being through comprehensive integration." (*A/68/PV.10, p. 4*)

In that context, El Salvador would like to reiterate the importance of fulfilling the provisions of resolution 47/19 of 24 November 1992, which emphasizes the need to put an end to the financial, commercial, economic embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and calls for an end to that the embargo. It also indicates that under Cuban jurisdiction, the application of national laws with extraterritorial effect violates the legitimate interests of the people as well as the right to all forms of trade and navigation. Those laws are an impediment to all efforts by the Cuban people to ensure social and economic development. Moreover, the mechanisms currently in place to impose the embargo violate the principles governing global economic, commercial, monetary and financial relations as well as numerous resolutions of the United Nations and many other international organizations.

El Salvador reiterates the call contained in a special communiqué issued by a number of Heads of State and Government from South America who met in Panama City at the twenty-third Ibero-American Summit, held on 18 and 19 October. They reaffirmed free exchange and transparent practices in international trade and rejected unilateral coercive measures that affect the well-being of all peoples and their access to and full enjoyment of the benefits of international cooperation in all arenas, and impede the process of integration. One such case is the financial, commercial and economic blockade of the United States against Cuba.

To conclude, I underscore and defend the Cuban cause, and demand an end to the embargo imposed by the United States, which has caused enormous damage to the people and has made no headway towards attaining

the goals set by those who originally advocated it. In addition, I reiterate the deep sympathy and solidarity of the people and Government of El Salvador with the people and Government of Cuba in this cause. There so many reasons to dismantle this anachronism in the twenty-first-century.

Mr. Aung Kyaw Zan (Myanmar): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation's position on resolution 68/8, which was adopted this morning.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/68/PV.38).

In keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Myanmar has always strived to promote respect for the sovereign equality and territorial equality of States. Similarly, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Myanmar has steadfastly adhered to the principled position of the Movement in opposing the use of unilateral trade and economic sanctions that have been imposed against some members of the Movement for the purpose of exerting political pressure.

As a country that has experienced similar unilateral sanctions before, Myanmar fully understands that the imposition of sanctions on developing countries can have a devastating impact on the efforts of those countries to achieve sustainable development. Myanmar therefore supports the final document adopted at the sixteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which calls for the international community to adopt all necessary measures to put an end to the embargo against the people and Government of Cuba and protect the sovereign right of all other countries to expand trade and economic relations with Cuba.

In line with previous United Nations resolutions on this item, we firmly believe that constructive dialogue is needed to foster mutual trust and understanding, as well as harmony and peaceful coexistence among the nations of the world. It was in that context that Myanmar voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Khitchadeth (Lao People's Democratic Republic): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/68/116) under this agenda item. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic of Republic of Iran on behalf the Non-Aligned Movement, and by the Permanent Representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (see A/68/PV.38).

We are here today to express our sympathy to the innocent and peace-loving people of Cuba, who have continued to endure the misery resulting from the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against them. That embargo has impeded the Cuban Government's efforts to eliminate poverty, promote economic and social development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, the embargo violates international law, goes against the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and constitutes a transgression of the rights of sovereign States to peace, development and security.

In accordance with resolution 68/8, Member States must neither promulgate nor enforce any law, regulation or measure that jeopardizes the sovereign right of Member States to participate in the international financial and commercial system. Based on the universal principle of sovereign equality under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, no nation has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another nation, despite any differences that may exist in their sociopolitical systems. As a sovereign and independent nation, the Republic of Cuba has the right to choose its own political system, as well as its path of development, based on its specific conditions.

In 2012, 188 Member States voted in favour of resolution 67/4 on this item, and this year again 188 Member States voted in favour of resolution 68/8 on the same item. That is irrefutable proof that the battle for the lifting of the blockade is recognized and supported by the vast majority of the international community. Therefore, the blockade must be lifted immediately and unconditionally. The Lao People's Democratic Republic joins the majority of Member States in supporting the Cuban people in that fight. As Members of the United Nations, we should do everything we can to help Cuba to fully reclaim its legitimate right to integrate into the globalized economy.

In that spirit, my delegation voted in favour of resolution 68/8, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba".

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we wish to align ourselves with the statement made by

the representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and with those made on behalf of the African Group and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba (see A/68/PV.38).

We welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba in the Assembly today.

We confirm that we support Cuba's position, as expressed by the aforementioned representatives and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. For many decades, the General Assembly, the most representative and significant organ of the United Nations, has called for an end to that coercive measure, which contravenes the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, namely, the unilateral and extraterritorial economic blockade against Cuba. However, that call has been made in vain.

The overwhelming majority of Member States have been calling for an end to that blockade. Today once again, the General Assembly affirmed its position, when 188 Member States voted in favour of resolution 68/8. My country, the Sudan, also voted in favour of that resolution. We have listened to the representatives of several Member States, who stated that the imposition of extraterritorial law contravenes the principles of the equal sovereignty of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. That is an issue that we all agree on. However, we have failed to put an end to that practice to date.

Unfortunately, my country, the Sudan, is also a victim, like Cuba, of a unilateral blockade imposed by the United States of America that affects all walks of life, as described by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba. It has especially affected the economic, social and development sectors of the Sudan, just as Cuba has been deprived of its ability to import spare parts for vital sectors of the economy that are needed for development, such as communication, railways and civil aviation, as well as the sugar industry and medication.

I am not exaggerating when I say that the embargo has fuelled conflict in my country, because all the areas that are conflict-ridden are plagued by underdevelopment. The failure to achieve development, which is the result of a lack of resources, can also be attributed to the lack of spare parts for sugar factories and other vital sectors of our economy.

That being said, I wonder — and we believe that this Assembly agrees with us — how the United Nations can draw up a road map for a post-2015 development agenda, combat poverty and achieve sustainable development while we face laws that hinder international trade and impose blockades and embargoes on countries that are striving to achieve a life with dignity for their people and the right livelihood for their nations. How can we save lives, ensure medication, help the elderly, children and the poor while there are countries that deprive people of their basic needs to live and survive? We do not believe that such actions represent the principles for which the United Nations was established.

Today, I call upon the President of this important forum, which represents the voice of all humankind, and the Secretary-General — and I know that both the Assembly and the Secretary-General wish to promote the principles of this international Organization — to speak out, as representatives have already done, and reject any unilateral measures that can undermine the proper foundations of international relations.

We have heard many previous speakers list the unilateral economic measures imposed by certain States. Those measures are in line with other coercive steps that go beyond the sphere of trade and affect other sectors, such as the refusal to grant Heads of State visas and preventing them from attending the meetings of the General Assembly, as happened to His Excellency Mr. Al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan. Such measures undermine the credibility of the United Nations. Moreover, if they continue, they will undermine the lofty principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the foremost among them being the equal sovereignty between States and the promotion of friendly relations among States.

That is why we look to the President and the Secretary-General to raise their voices and reject measures, such as the one by the United States of America that deprived the President of the Sudan an entry visa in violation of the host country agreement. That is a unilateral measure similar to the unilateral economic embargo on Cuba and the Sudan, which has been in effect for many decades. We strongly call upon the President of the General Assembly, as it is his moral responsibility to stop any measures that violate the host country agreement. That is why this morning the Sudan voted in favour of resolution 68/8, which calls for putting an end to the unfair economic embargo.

Mr. Vidal (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): As in previous years, Uruguay voted in favour of the resolution on this item (resolution 68/8), introduced by the delegation of Cuba, as we believe that the embargo against that country is contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and contravenes the rules of international law, in particular the rules governing international trade and those of the World Trade Organization.

Uruguay's position fits into the broader context of the defence of multilateralism, non-intervention and the peaceful settlement of disputes, which are fundamental principles of our diplomacy. That situation also affects another fundamental principle — the legal equality of States. It is precisely out of respect for that principle that our country rejects any unilateral or extraterritorial coercive measure that violates the rules of international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The clearest contemporary example is the embargo unfairly imposed against the Republic of Cuba. The Eastern Republic of Uruguay has expressed on many occasions and repeats again today its opposition to the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba, which severely affects the well-being of the Cuban people.

As a matter of principle, Uruguay rejects and does not recognize the extraterritorial application of domestic laws of other States in its national legislation. In that regard, we condemn the application of unilateral coercive measures by the United States against Cuba, as they represent a form of pressure and an obstacle to dialogue and the necessary rapprochement between the parties, which we hope will be resumed. By voting in favour of the resolution, Uruguay reiterates its commitment to multilateralism as a legitimate instrument for resolving disputes between States and for promoting effective international cooperation, human rights, security and understanding between peoples.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

The representative of Cuba has asked to take the floor in exercise of the right of reply. I remind him that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. Godard knows he is lying when he asserts that the United States Government promotes respect for human rights in Cuba (see A/68/PV.38). The embargo is a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people and is an act of genocide, according to article 2, subparagraphs (b) and (c) of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The United States Government has no moral authority whatsoever to present itself as an accuser in that regard. It is responsible for wars that have killed millions of civilians. It carries out extrajudicial executions with drones and deadly technologies. It applies the death penalty in a racially and socially discriminatory manner, and it commits horrendous legal errors. It also kidnaps people and isolates them from justice in arbitrary detention. It cruelly uses torture and forced feeding in the case of hunger strikes.

The Government of the United States manipulates the issue of human rights as it sees fit. Its double standards destroyed the old and discredited Commission on Human Rights, which imploded when the United States prevented a resolution whose sole intent was to investigate human rights violations at the Guantánamo naval base, which have been committed and are committed against foreign prisoners. With the establishment of the Human Rights Council hope was renewed, but the United States very quickly boycotted it. Today American delegations are again generating pressure, promoting resolutions to support their own narrow self-interests and that lack objectivity, impartiality and universality.

Mr. Godard also lies when he says that the United States provides medical supplies and equipment to Cuba. I ask him if he could give some examples of that, and I invite him to keep doing so. Why then does the United States not lift the embargo on medicines and medical equipment? If what Mr. Godard claims were true, then why is the United States is impeding the free flow of information and Cubans' access to the Internet by preventing Cuba's connection to nearby submarine cables?

It is not true that the United States Government supports the Cuban people's desire to freely decide their own destiny. That country usurped the independence that the Cuban people won against Spanish colonialism, imposed the Platt Amendment, intervened militarily, occupied parts of our territory like the Guantánamo naval base and supported bloody dictatorships. In

taking our freedom, the United States established an economic, political and media blockade, launched an invasion of Playa Girón, exercised State terrorism and adopted legislation, including the Helms-Burton Act, that authorizes full intervention in Cuba. It supports a policy of destabilization and regime change.

The United States delegation is lying when it says that its Government provides humanitarian assistance. In so doing, it cynically counts the multimillion-dollar funds earmarked by the United States Agency for International Development for subversion in our country, the hard-earned remittances and packages sent by Cuban emigrants to their families and the modest donations sent by non-governmental organizations after having overcome numerous obstacles.

Why does the United States Government not respect the constitutional right and the freedom of United States citizens to travel to Cuba as they travel to any other country, including in times of war? Why does it not lift the embargo on the telecommunications sector? Why does it not allow Cuba to be connected to submarine cables to access the Internet? Why does it not eliminate its illegal and subversive radio and television broadcasts? It would be better if it allowed the purchase of American software and the training of specialists, eliminated the restrictions on information, and allowed the use of services that provide technological support, which are currently prohibited in Cuba. Why does it not allow cooperation and exchange programmes between universities and provide scholarships in various areas of science and technology?

The United States pays mercenaries and agents in Cuba. It maintains a quadrennial public budget of more than $196 million to produce supposed dissidents. Mr. Alan Gross, who was punished under due process and who was cared for with the greatest consideration for humanitarian concerns, is a United States contractor who charged large sums of money to undertake subversive activities, using non-commercial technology, against the constitutional order of Cuba. Those acts are also provided for and sanctioned in the United States. The United States Government is responsible for the situation of Mr. Gross and should begin by sitting down and talking seriously if it wishes to find a solution to his case.

The entire world better understands the United States use of new technologies and its networks to impose its military and economic hegemony following the revelations confirming the existence of a United States system of global espionage, including against its own citizens and those of other countries, including the foreign diplomats of its closest allies. The United States is constantly riding roughshod over international law and the basic principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which Mr. Godard says it promotes.

The updating of the economic model, Mr. Godard, is an issue of the sovereignty of the Cuban people. We are not in the least bit interested in his opinion, nor in the opinion of the United States Government.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 41?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.